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CHALLENGE



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URANIUMGATE: Squabble Among U.S. Warmakers

The assassination of the Hussein brothers came at a convenient time for Bush (and his lapdog Tony Blair). But, even so, the main wing of the U.S. ruling class is turning George Bush's Iraqi uranium lie into a full-blown scandal. They may use it to launch a Watergate-style purge of the neo-conservative "Go It Alone" gang that dominates Bush's White House. The New York Times and Washington Post are leading the charge with a constant barrage of exposes. On July 15, the Times devoted an editorial, two op-ed articles, a news story, and a news analysis piece to "Uraniumgate."

Democratic presidential candidate Bob Graham said there are "grounds to impeach Bush." (Reuters, 7/17/03) And on July 16, Republicans narrowly beat back a Democratic push led by Jon Corzine and Teddy Kennedy for a Senate investigation into Bush's "misrepresentations." At the very least, the Democrats hope Bush's false weapons claims will provide them with plenty of ammunition in the 2004 elections.

Just as Watergate wasn't about a burglary, the current intelligence scandal isn't about a lie. All the media outlets and ruling class politicians knew about this story when they supported the call for war. CIA Chief Tenet had pulled the same story from a Bush speech three months earlier! While they disagreed about how to go to war, the ruling class was united on seizing Iraq and supporting the concept of "pre-emptive" war.

The main wing of the ruling class is really attacking Bush (especially Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Feith) because in their view, he didn't send enough troops to Iraq or kill enough Iraqis. Now the U.S. is bogged down in a guerrilla war. His tax cuts contribute to a \$455 billion deficit that could cut into the military budget. He didn't win any major allies, other than Britain, to the Iraq invasion, and has done little, except to break a longshoremen's strike, supposedly to protect U.S. seaports from terrorism.

The liberals are charging that Bush squandered an opportunity to militarize the U.S., especially the youth, after Sept. 11. William Galston,

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Fight Racism, Fight for Communism

Capitalism Breeds Mass Racist Unemployment

In June, hundreds of black workers and youth fought the police for three days in Benton Harbor, MI. The rebellion was sparked when racist cop Wes KKKoza killed 27-year old Terrance Shurn in a high-speed chase. But looming over the racist police terror is a 25 percent unemployment rate in a city of 12,000 black people.

Nationally, the unemployment rate for black workers is rising twice as fast as that of whites, and faster than at any time since the mid-1970's. Low-wage workers and women forced from welfare to low wage jobs in the 1990's have largely kept their jobs. Factory workers in higher paying jobs have been hit the hardest.

Since the recession began in March 2001, about 2.6 million jobs have been destroyed in the last 28 months. Nearly 90 percent were in manufacturing. The recession may be over, but racist unemployment is booming.

This is the longest string of monthly job losses after the start of a recession since the Great Depression, and most of these jobs have been permanently lost. "This is not like the cyclical downturns in the old days, when you got furloughed for a few weeks and then recalled," said Jared Bernstein, of the Economic Policy Institute. "These jobs are gone, and that represents a potentially significant slide in living standards." (NYT 7/14)

Autoliv, a Swedish seat belt maker, is closing a plant in Indianapolis and laying off 350 workers. Over 75 percent are black. Many are young workers without high school diplomas,

who were hired in the late 1990's when the unemployment rate in Indianapolis was only 2 percent.

They were making \$12 to \$13 an hour. "These young men started families, dug in, took apartments, purchased vehicles...now they are being returned to their old environment," said Michael Barnes, director of an A.F.L.-C.I.O. training program that helps laid-off workers in Indiana search for new jobs. (NYT 7/14).

Black industrial workers, once concentrated in the Midwest and Northeast, are now spread across the country as companies moved to low-wage towns and cities. Now many companies are moving work overseas in search of even cheaper labor, and according to the National Association of Manufacturers, every state has lost manufacturing jobs over the last three years. Tens of thousands of textile workers in the South are also losing their jobs as the bosses seek to super-exploit cheap Asian labor. Instead of waging a real fight against the bosses moving their jobs to areas of cheaper labor, the AFL-CIO just waved the flag saying "Buy American," a code phrase for blaming workers overseas and leaving the bosses off the hook.

Over 1,000 jobs were lost in the last two years as mills closed in Roanoke Rapids, N.C.; another 1,000 in mill closings in Columbus, GA.; 1,500 lost in the closing of a sweatshirt

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EDITORIAL: Workers Should Take No Side in Uraniumgate

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a domestic policy aide in the Clinton White House complains, "In the immediate wake of 9/11, the administration's failure to call for any real sacrifice from citizens fortified my belief that the terrorist attack would be the functional equivalent of Pearl Harbor without World War II, intensifying insecurity without altering civic behavior." (United We Serve, see below) He cites a November 2002 survey showing that most college students "would seek alternatives if called upon to join the military." This is a far cry from the 1999 Hart-Rudman Commission which predicted, "Americans will likely die on American soil, possibly in large numbers...If the stakes rise in such a fashion...the American people will be ready to sacrifice blood and treasure, and come together to do so...."

The rulers fear that Bush fumbled the ball when they desperately need cannon fodder for their far-flung imperialist ventures. U.S. rulers face a troop shortfall in the hundreds of thousands as they face enemies arrayed along "a seamless battlefield, stretching from Morocco

Black Workers Are Key Force in Fighting Racist Unemployment

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factory in Martinsville, VA. These are mostly black workers earning \$11 an hour plus benefits, more than they will make on their next jobs.

In 2000, there were 2 million black workers in factory jobs, or 10.1 percent of the total of 20 million U.S. factory workers. Since March 2001, 300,000 black workers, or 15 percent, have lost their factory jobs. Racist unemployment also hit other sections of the working class. White workers lost 1.7 million jobs, or 10 percent of their total.

1967 Mass Rebellion in Detroit Forced the Creation of Tens of Thousands of Jobs

On a steamy night in July 1967, Detroit police raided an illegal after-hours club. What followed was one of the most dramatic armed rebellions of U.S. workers in our time. Within 24 hours, the Detroit police were out of ammunition and pinned down in their precincts. The Michigan National Guard was called in and was also quickly defeated by the armed uprising. Finally, President Lyndon Johnson diverted troops that were on their way to Vietnam and sent them to occupy Detroit. Thousands were arrested and dozens were killed. Many of the rebels were Vietnam vets. They had returned from the war to find racist unemployment, poverty and police terror, and decided to use their military skills against the rulers.

The Detroit Rebellion showed the key role the black workers and youth play in the class struggle in the U.S. It led to the hiring of 100,000 black workers by GM, Ford and Chrysler, where 20 years of court cases had failed. In contrast, liberal Democratic Governor Jennifer Granholm offered a measly

to Mindanao [in the Philippines] and from the Caucasus to central Africa" (Stratfor, 7/9/03). With recruitment stagnant, the Pentagon is forced to prolong deployments in Iraq indefinitely, and many U.S. troops grow angrier by the day.

Millions of troops will be needed down the road for a conflict with China or some coalition of Russia and Europe. Consequently, the liberals are opening a debate on compulsory national service. While they attack Bush for his lies, they push the bigger lie that killing and dying for U.S. imperialism are forms of humanitarian service.

Attacking Bush is all too easy. The hard part is exposing the liberals who will cynically try to turn the mass hatred for the Bush gang into mass support for imperialist wars and fascist terror. The political struggle to expose the liberals and the monstrous system they serve must be waged in our unions, churches and other mass organizations. Building a mass PLP and the long-term struggle to eliminate capitalism is the only way to truly serve the people. ☸

250 six-week minimum wage summer jobs for Benton Harbor. The defeat of the old communist movement made it easier for the bosses to inflict unprecedented poverty and misery on the workers of the world. As the clouds of war gather, these crises will deepen.

Racist unemployment will end when the working class, led by a mass PLP, overthrows the bosses. PLP's strategy for revolution rests on building a mass base for communism in the factories, armed forces, schools and communities. Within this process, black workers, soldiers and youth are the key force for revolution. In the factories and mills, and within the pro-capitalist unions, fighting racist layoffs and plant closings can lead to a much broader readership for CHALLENGE and more workers joining PLP. Maybe Benton Harbor is a sign that a storm is brewing. Let the lightening flash and the thunder roll. ☸

Jobless Economic 'Recovery'

On July 10 the U.S. Department of Labor reported 439,000 workers filed new claims for unemployment benefits in the week ending July 5, an increase of 5,000 from the week before. Any number over 400,000 indicates a decline in overall employment and new jobless claims have exceeded 400,000 for 21 weeks in a row.

The number receiving benefits jumped by 87,000 in one week to over 3.8 million, the highest level in 20 years. The official unemployment rate is 6.4 percent, but only three percent, are receiving unemployment benefits. And according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the teenage unemployment rate is at 63 percent, its highest level in 55 years. ☸

United We Serve: National Service and the Future of Citizenship

The Brookings Institution has published an important new book called United We Serve: National Service and the Future of Citizenship. It includes essays by leading liberal politicians and academics including Bill Clinton, who endorses senator John McCain's focus on "making short-term service, both civilian and military, a rite of passage for young Americans."

The book reprints New York Congressman Charles Rangel's piece "Bring Back the Draft" Many articles recommend a choice between military and civilian service. Charles Moskos, a Rockefeller Humanities fellow and member of the Democratic Leadership Council that brought Clinton to power, sees civilian service bolstering homeland fascism. Young people could "guard nuclear plants, patrol the nation's borders, or serve as customs agents." Or they could turn informers for the cops. Says Moskos, "The new service program would expand crime-prevention and neighborhood watch programs." As for restoring the draft Moskos says, "Privileged young Americans should serve in the armed forces. Their participation would not only provide a fine example of leadership but might also increase the public's willingness to accept wartime casualties." ☸

PLP WELCOMED ON PAVONE ST.

"Hey, do you know where Pavone Street is?"

"You're on it. And you know it's the most dangerous street in Benton Harbor, right?"

But as comrades walked down the street, visiting door to door (some with contacts that we already met), we knew that this was not the case. Workers in Benton Harbor had received us days after the rebellion, and once again they were open to our communist ideas. The rebellion occurred a few weeks ago after Terrence Shurn was killed at the hands of police.

As Jesse Jackson and other liberals have passed through town, workers have seen no change. There is still massive unemployment and on every street you can find vacant lots. In conversations we pointed out that liberals couldn't fix the problems because they don't try to change the system that exploits all workers. People we talked to know the brutal realities of capitalism because they live with them everyday and recognize that it isn't just "one bad cop" but a whole rotten system.

As we walked up and down blocks in the community where much of the rioting had occurred we met lots of good people. Workers greeted us and were open to conversation. One man, who was a good friend of Shurn's, talked about how most young black men in Benton Harbor have been in jail at some time or another and that they can't find jobs. But he wasn't depressed; he was angry and had a lot to say. Talking with this young worker and others showed that people here want our revolutionary ideas and can give leadership to our movement. We now have dozens of potential new friends we hope to talk to in the coming weeks. ☸

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR:

- ☸ PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of capitalism, like wages and divisions of labor.
- ☸ Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.
- ☸ Communism means working collectively to build a society based on need. We will abolish work for wages,

- money and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.
- ☸ Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.
- ☸ Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.
- ☸ Communism means abolishing nations which leads to nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.
- ☸ Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers, eventually everyone must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!



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Fighting Racist Police Terror and Imperialist War

NEW YORK CITY — On May 16, NYC cops stormed Alberta Spruill's Harlem apartment with a stun gun and a grenade. Saying they were looking for drug dealers, police handcuffed the city worker who collapsed and died on the way to the hospital. Several days later, cops killed Ousmane Zongo, an unarmed immigrant from Burkina Faso, Africa, in a raid in a warehouse in the Chelsea area of Manhattan. Zongo had nothing to do with the people the cops were looking for. In April 2002, New Jersey police asphyxiated Dominican factory worker, Santiago Villanueva, claiming he was on drugs. Villanueva, who lived in Upper Manhattan, was actually having an epileptic seizure (See **CHALLENGE**, 7/23).

PLP members are active in a grassroots group that is organizing in Harlem and Upper Manhattan and has become involved in all three police brutality cases. Members of the group participated in a rally of over 500 people, surrounded by an equal number of cops, outside City Hall on June 21. We also participated in a rally with other groups, at a pre-trial hearing of the four cops who killed Villanueva.

In May the group wrote a resolution condemning the murders of Spruill and Zongo. There was a lively debate about

whether the killings were occurring in the fascist climate of Homeland Security. PL members said that our resolution should state, "Whereas these murders follow a long line of racist police murders this is the kind of terror that the Patriot Act will make pervasive. We deplore the growing atmosphere of fear, intimidation and terror which has been especially directed towards immigrants since 9/11 and now threatens us all."

A member of the grassroots group read the resolution at a church service for Spruill and others distributed it at the vigil. We distributed more than 400 copies at a neighborhood meeting and the June 21 protest. Now we're involved in three defense committees that are fighting for criminal charges against the cops and to expose more cases of racist police brutality.

The coalition was formed to seek causes of "terrorism," to oppose U.S. "foreign policy" and the war in Afghanistan following 9/11 and later to organize against the US invasion of Iraq. We sponsored two well-attended conferences in 2001 and 2002. We plan another conference in 2003, focusing on the U.S. occupation of Iraq, growing imperialist rivalry in West Africa and the "globalization" of the U.S. military.

The cost of the Iraq war and occupation, now at \$4 billion a month, is projected to be upwards of \$200 billion. The "proposed U.S. defense budget through 2008 would rise to \$460 billion a year, up from the \$265 billion spent on defense in 1996, when the current military buildup began." (Washington Post 7/13) We have consistently tied the economic costs of U.S. imperialism to increasing hardships for the working class, both in the U.S. and internationally. Now the group is getting active around racist police brutality, attacks on immigrants, gentrification and housing costs, job loss and budget cuts.

As we get more active and get to know more people, we are increasing the readership of **CHALLENGE** hand-to-hand, through networks and by leaving **CHALLENGE** in public areas in the community. We have two study groups that discuss **CHALLENGE**, pamphlets about imperialism and political economy and videos. Contradictions abound.

"We have to accept the reality that we're living under this system and have to make it better." "I don't agree with your vision of communism." "People won't understand." "I agree that capitalism is bad and that communism offers possibilities." "Let's do reform now and revolution



later." "Wouldn't it be better if Bush were out?" "What about greed and human nature?" "I see your point, but I have to ask questions. These discussions are provoking me to think. I go to sleep thinking about a wageless system."

As the struggle continues in the mass organizations and in the PL-led study groups, we're all learning how to maintain friendship and unity in the class struggle. PL members must be clear and convincing while welcoming our friends' questions and disagreements. These struggles moves the process towards communist consciousness forward for all of us, giving us more confidence in each other, the working class and its allies and the Party. ☸

NEA CONVENTION: PLP BRINGS FIGHT AGAINST RACISM AND TO OPPOSE DEMOCRATS

NEW ORLEANS, LA — Ten thousand teachers attended the annual Representative Assembly of the National Education Association (NEA). PLP teachers and students, as convention delegates and talking to delegates outside, distributed 500 **CHALLENGES** and 3,000 leaflets, increased **CHALLENGE** subscriptions and made several good contacts.

The NEA leadership labeled this meeting, "The United States of Education—Great Public Schools for Every Child." The reality is the opposite. Racist cutbacks in schools and social services are aspects of growing fascism caused by the crisis of overproduction, a war budget, tax cuts for the rich, and interest payments to banks. In his keynote address, NEA President Weaver acknowledged this reality, detailing all the attacks on public schools. He urged teachers to get "riled up" and "flood Congress with e-mails!"

PLP posed an alternative strategy and engaged teachers in struggle about the nature of the crisis and the best way to fight in the interests of our students. We raised a New Business Item to encourage debate about the most effective way to fight racist cutbacks in school funding. We called for strikes and other mass actions in unity with other workers instead of endorsing candidates and lobbying legislators. We explained that politicians of both parties support the war in Iraq, which is paid for by racist attacks on social services and schools, hitting black and Latin students first and hardest.

This was raised in every state delegation, as well as the Peace and Justice and Hispanic Caucuses, and on the floor of the convention. We got a lot of objections from people who blame President Bush for the war and the cutbacks, and just want to get rid of him. We put out a leaflet and a button that explained "It's Not Just BUSH: It's Capitalism!" We explained that the "lesser evil" Democrats support the war and that the NEA has become part of the Democratic Party machine. Instead of relying on the working class, teachers are mobilized to elect and lobby politicians, begging for crumbs.

Before the floor debate, representatives from Nevada and Texas said that their delegations would support our motion if we didn't describe the cutbacks as "racist." We refused. Some of our friends also sug-

gested that we soften the language. These were the best discussions we had about the nature of racism as super-exploitation of black and Latin workers, the racist character of poverty, unemployment, the army and the prisons. We struggled over the need to fight racism to build a united working class. We explained how racism is used to justify the cuts against all of us. To destroy capitalism, we must make a communist revolution and smash racism. This principled struggle goes hand-in-hand with winning workers away from reliance on capitalist politicians and onto the working class.

While we lost the vote to keep the word "racist" in our motion, we all learned a lot about the importance of putting the struggle against racism front and center. Students who came to the convention helped write and distribute a leaflet to the delegates about this principled struggle.

Lots of teachers are frustrated with the union's strategy of relying on politicians, and want more class struggle. The motion, without the word "racist," came very close to passing — in fact some delegates told us they thought it did pass. An alternate proposal — to "Get Out the Vote" in 2004 — had its budget cut from \$3.5 million to writing an article in the NEA newspaper.

The discussion about who to rely on and the struggle over the importance of fighting racism is part of the ongoing struggle with our base. We came as delegates to this convention with friends from our local schools, unions and regional assemblies who know us as fighters against racism, imperialist war and capitalism. Throughout the year, we have participated with them in struggles against the war in Iraq, the fascist Patriot Act, racism, and cutbacks. In this assembly, we were able to build on that work and raise the struggle to a higher level. Our friends spoke to the motion, wore our buttons, and helped in many other aspects of the parliamentary and political struggle. This is part of the long-term struggle to build a base for PLP among workers and youth and fight for working class power. ☸

CSU Trustees Are No Allies in Fight Against Budget Cuts

LONG BEACH, CA, July 16 — "They say cutback, we say FIGHTBACK!" Students and teachers chanted this outside the recent California Board of Trustees meeting. The Trustees are appointed by the governor to represent capitalist interests in the California State University (CSU) system. The CSU is the largest university system in the country, serving nearly half a million mostly working class and minority students.

The Trustees voted to increase our tuition by 30% on top of the 10% increase last semester. The chancellor's office also said there would be another increase next year. That means that by next spring, our tuition will increase by at least 50%. One protester said, "It doesn't take a PhD. economist to understand that this will lead to a catastrophic dropout rate."

The state of California (fifth largest economy in the world) faces a budget deficit of \$38 billion caused by declining profits, taxes skewed to make workers pay the lion's share, and cuts in Federal allotments in order to pay for war. The ruling class is trying to decrease the deficit on the backs on the workers. They have already cut health care and K-12 education along with many other social services. Now they are proposing a \$200 million cut in higher education. The chancellor says, "To manage cuts of this size we will have to raise fees, layoff employees, and cap enrollment." On top of the tuition increase, the chancellor's office is recommending layoffs of 3,000-5,000 jobs (11% of the workforce).

The NY Times recently revealed that the U.S. is paying \$4 billion a month for the occupation of Iraq. It's clear that every bomb that fell on Iraq fell on the U.S. working class as well. PLP members and friends made the connection between the war and the budget cuts at the protest demonstration in speeches, flyers and most importantly **CHALLENGE** distribution.

It was no surprise that the Trustees voted for the tuition increase even after they heard the impassioned public comments from students and teachers opposing the increase and

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Steel Bosses Throw Retirees Overboard To Stay Afloat

According to the WALL STREET JOURNAL (5/12), more than 200,000 retired steelworkers and dependents, at roughly a dozen steel companies, will be stripped of their health-care benefits as their former employers reorganize or liquidate in bankruptcy.

About 40,000 LTV retirees and dependents have been left without health insurance, even though LTV was purchased by International Steel Group (ISG) for \$1.5 billion and is now making profits. ISG assumed nearly all of LTV's liabilities, except retirees' health insurance. The stolen benefits of retirees are paying for the jobs of current and future workers. A similar situation awaits the retirees of Bethlehem, National and

other steel companies that are being "consolidated" into their leaner, stronger competitors.

This same fate might soon visit retirees in auto, the airlines and other industries that are looking for ways out. This year US Airways will spend \$12 million on health benefits for current workers, but more than \$55 million for retirees, dependents and surviving spouses. At Ford Motor Co., the figures are \$600 million for current workers and \$1.9 billion for retirees and their families.

At the integrated mills that manufacture steel from raw materials, there are 600,000 retirees and dependents compared to 80,000 to 90,000 current workers and their dependents. When

Bethlehem was sold to ISG earlier this year, it had 95,000 retirees, 13 for every active worker. At LTV, the ratio was seven retirees for every active worker.

The estimated lifetime tab for U.S. steel retirees is \$14 billion. More than 30 unionized steel-makers have filed for bankruptcy-court protection since 1998. Bethlehem, once the third-largest U.S. steelmaker, filed in October 2001. LTV, once the fourth-largest, filed in December 2000.

In the 1960's, the U.S. steel industry was still one of the lowest-cost producers and made about 35% of all the steel in the world. Bethlehem and U.S. Steel owned raw-materials, railroads and ships that could transport steel cheaply and quickly. In 1960, imported steel represented about 4.5% of the U.S. market.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, low-cost imports exposed the inefficiencies and outmoded technology of U.S. producers. By the early 1970s, imports had jumped to 18% of the U.S. market. LTV went through two bankruptcies, seven years apart. Over 350,000 steelworkers lost their jobs.

Steelworkers around the world are caught in fierce international competition and a world-wide steel glut. On July 11, the World Trade Organization ruled that the U.S. illegally imposed import tariffs on steel products. The WTO panel heard complaints by the European



JEFFERSON, Wis July 7th—Tyson Food Workers confront scabs crossing the picket line.

Union, Japan, South Korea, China, Switzerland, Norway, New Zealand and Brazil, and concluded that the U.S. did not have grounds to impose the tariffs. The Bush administration will appeal the decision and there will likely be a final ruling by the end of the year. According to Arancha Gonzalez, the European Union's (EU) spokesperson on trade issues, if the appeal fails, American imports will face sanctions worth up to \$2.2 billion almost immediately. (NY Times 7/11)

Tariffs and benefit cuts today are leading to missiles and thousands of ground troops later. This is the essence of imperialism. Nationalist campaigns like "Stand Up for Steel" only help the bosses get the workers in line. Communist revolution requires the mass participation of industrial workers across all borders. We're working on it. ☸

The Struggles Of A Retired Steelworker

Chuck Kurilko labored at LTV Corp. for 37 years. He retired in November 2001, with a blood clot, high cholesterol, diabetes, infected lungs and congestive heart failure. After earning \$65,000 a year, his pension was \$2,450 a month and he paid \$115 a month for health-care coverage, which covered 100% of their medical costs and cost him \$10 to \$20 for prescriptions. His congestive heart failure qualified him for disability pay, which kicked in eight months after he retired.

A month later LTV liquidated. The company wanted to end health coverage for retirees, but the union negotiated some coverage, but at a higher

price. In January his health-insurance premium jumped 61% to \$185.

In February, LTV was sold to ISG, which didn't assume health-care coverage for retirees. His only option was to pay much of the insurance premium under COBRA, a federal law that enables former workers to temporarily extend their insurance at their own expense. The monthly premium skyrocketed to \$1,305.19. That same month, his pension was cut 38% to \$1,529.41 a month, after the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corp., took over LTV's pension plan. In January 2003, LTV's contributions to their health insurance ended and monthly payments jumped to more than \$2,800.

When he discusses money, his eyes water. "When I think of all the years of sacrificing. Betcha in my whole life, I may have missed 10 days of work in 30 years...I'm sick of it all. I'm scared to death." (Wall Street Journal 5/12) ☸

From UK to South Africa: A Tale of Two Layoffs

On April 30, Sir Brian Moffat and Roger Moore both lost their jobs at Corus, the troubled British steel giant that eliminated 1,150 jobs. Both have spent much of their working lives at the former British Steel. Sir Brian, Corus chairman for four years, made £600,000 in salary and pension last year and retired with an annual pension estimated at £300,000. CEO Tony Pedder departed with a £550,000 golden handshake and a pension of £2.3m.

Roger is 54 and may never work again. He was laid off from Corus's Stocksbridge plant after 17 years' service, where he was a £24,000-a-year grinder. He will receive a lump sum payment of about £18,000 and doesn't know what his pension will be. Corus has eliminated 12,000 jobs since 1999, including 10,000 in the UK, before these current 1,150 job cuts. Another 2,200 jobs are in jeopardy. ☸

South Africa's ANC-led Government Defends Iscor against Steel Strikers

Steel maker Iscor (ISC) has obtained a court order preventing the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) from engaging in unlawful protest activities. The order, granted by South Africa's Labour Court, which is run by Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, followed a flair-up of violence between striking steel workers and scabs during a shift change at various Iscor plants.

NUMSA is demanding 5,000 RAND back pay per worker to cushion the effects of the restructuring processes that have taken place in the past seven years and a pay raise for all skills grades. Iscor bosses claim the strikers are engaging in acts of violence and intimidation against strikebreakers, damaging property and vehicles and setting up blockades to restrict access to the plants. The court order prevents the strikers from obstructing access to the plants, intimidating scabs and sub-contractors and from damaging property. The order also requires the union "to take all reasonable steps to persuade their members not to engage in unlawful activities associated with the strike." ☸

Trustees Are No Allies

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even after all 23 CSU student governments voted to oppose it. Capitalism is an impersonal system that always puts profits for the few over the needs of the many. The Trustees voting to increase our fees represent nothing more than their class interest. The leadership of the California Faculty Association (a large professional union) argues that all they are asking for is a "seat at the table" to make decisions with the Trustees. However, it's clear to many students and teachers that the Trustees are on the other side — they will never be our friends.

Students and teachers plan to go to classes, student organizations and unions to propose a strike against these cuts. There is opportunity for action. There is also opportunity for greater understanding that capitalism is a system based on racism, war, and profits and the solution is the growth of the revolutionary communist PLP. JOIN US! ☸

Verizon: Billions in Profits, Cutbacks for Workers

NEW YORK, July 17 — Verizon — the largest U.S. telecommunications giant and the second most profitable — is on a collision course with 75,000 workers in the Communications Workers of America (CWA) as contracts expire August 2nd . The company, demanding that workers pay a much greater share of their health benefits and retirement plans, is seeking to subcontract work and lay off any worker hired within the past eight years, while transferring others out of the region. Verizon laid off 2,400 workers last winter.

steady decline in providing local telephone service as the use of cell phones explodes and as more people turn to cable providers for Internet access. "Cell phones, e-mail, instant messaging — none of that was as prevalent as it is now. It is a different industry and we have to manage it differently," said company spokesman John Bonomo.

"They want a strike, there's no doubt in my mind," said CWA Local 1101 president Al Luzzi. "It is an opportunity for them to move thousands of jobs outside the state. They throw a switch and calls are shifted to Texas and other right-to-work states. It took us 40 years to build up our contract to provide a fair wage for our members and some protection against layoffs. They want that back."

There was a two-week strike three years ago, and in 1989 there was a violent, four-month strike. The company, then known as NYNEX, imported scabs to take over union jobs. Patriotic all-class unity existed for a brief period after 9/11, when Lower Manhattan had to be rewired by union workers after the collapse of the World Trade Center. But those feelings have evaporated. Verizon recorded \$67.6 billion in revenues last year, the highest in the industry. It took in \$4.1 billion in profit, while paying company Chairman Charles Lee \$15.6 million, and CEO Ivan Seidenberg

“Patriotic all-class unity existed for a brief period after 9/11, when Lower Manhattan had to be rewired by union workers after the collapse of the World Trade Center. But those feelings have evaporated.”

Verizon, the product of a merger between the old Bell Atlantic and the Southwest-based GTE, claims the concessions are "collateral damage," needed to compete in the turmoil of the telecom world. They must reverse their



\$9.5 million, plus stock options. The company's top local executive is Paul Crotty, who was a high-level official for mayors Koch and Giuliani, and who is currently up for a federal judgeship. But even super profits are not enough for the bosses. The capitalist drive to maximize profits is constant. The CWA wants to unionize the non-union Verizon Wireless workers, and recently won union representation for 17,000 Cingular Wireless workers. They want the company to live up to the "neutrality" agreement it made in 2000, allowing a "card-check," where the union would be recognized once a majority of workers signed cards.

Maybe the CWA leadership will be willing to trade lower wages and benefits for more members, like the UAW appears ready to do (CHALLENGE 7/24).

The working class is paying for the \$45 billion a year occupation of Iraq with more poverty, unemployment, and war. Many workers are reaching the boiling point. Maybe at Verizon the pot will boil over, setting the stage for 280,000 autoworkers in the fall. We welcome the opportunity to build the revolutionary communist movement from the sharpening class war. ☸

'COUNTER-TERRORISM' COPS — ALL A PART OF THE BOSSES' PLAN

The growth of fascism requires the expansion of a coordinated and committed national police force. The creation of the Department of Homeland Security is one aspect of this. Recent events show that U.S. bosses are serious about building an open political police force, whose job it is to terrorize the working class and crush dissent.

According to the Oakland Tribune (5/18), “[d]ays before firing wooden slugs at anti-war protesters, Oakland police were warned of potential violence at the Port of Oakland by California’s anti-terrorism intelligence center.” A spokesman for the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (CATIC) said hard evidence of violent intent was not needed before a “warning” was issued. Mike Van Winkle of CATIC stated: “You can almost argue that a protest against [the war] is a terrorist act.”

CATIC is “staffed with personnel from the FBI, Defense Intelligence Agency, and other federal, state, and local agencies” and was set up after Democrat Governor Gray Davis and Attorney General Bill Lockyer made it the “centerpiece” of their re-election campaigns. It is funded to the tune of \$6.7 million by the state of California.

CATIC's "Group Analysis Unit" (GAU) collected information, including e-mails and web site postings by leaders of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and anti-war friends. On April 2, the GAU issued a bulletin to Oakland cops and others: "National Day of Action includes Northern California Targets." The previous day, Derwin Longmire, an Oakland Police Department intelligence unit supervisor sent a bulletin to Oakland police commanders, warning them of violence by "[a]narchists in black masks." One of the cops who received that bulletin, captain Rod Yee, gave the order for the Oakland Police to open fire on April 7. ILWU members were among the wounded.

The rulers are bringing out their big guns to build these fascist cop combos. George "Killer" Kelling, the architect of "community policing" and chairman of the Police Institute, has launched a "Counter-terrorism Information Sharing Consortium" (CTISC). It is being run out of the Rutgers Center for Law and Justice in Newark, where Kelling is a professor. The Manhattan Institute, a major NYC think tank behind the Giuliani administration, also backed the formation of the CTISC. It involves over 24 cop organizations all along the Boston-Washington northeast corridor.

The FBI has set up 66 "Joint Terrorism Task Forces," merging local cops with the feds. Peter Harvey, the New Jersey Attorney General newly appointed by Democratic Governor McGreevey said the state must develop a "seamless web of communication" between federal, state, and local cops. New Jersey's new computerized counter-terrorism information system will be hooked up with 550 local cop agencies.

So far, CTISC's biggest accomplishment was arresting people for taking pictures of landmarks, bridges and large government buildings, including one New Jersey lawyer trying to photograph his car near the Newark FBI building. But the rulers will launch more violent assaults, including attacks on groups like the ILWU that do not threaten the capitalist system. Fascism exposes even more the horrors of capitalism. Fighting fascism, under communist leadership inside the unions, churches, community groups, schools and on campuses, can lead to a larger PLP. A mass communist-led movement would put Killer Kelling and all of his cop terror operations permanently out of business.

A future article will discuss Kelling's history, the racist nature of community policing and why the ruling class finds these ideas so useful. ☆

Liberia: Youth Killed For Mineral Profits

The 13-year Liberian civil war continues with fierce attacks in Monrovia, the capital city, between rebel forces that want to depose the government of Charles Taylor, who came to power in 1997 after six years of a violent civil war. Both Taylor and his enemies in the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) have nothing to offer to the masses. LURD is led by Sekou Conneth who gets his money from Liberian exiles in the U.S.

Many Liberians want the U.S. to send the Marines to help put an end to the bloodshed. The Bush administration is divided over whether to send thousands of Marines there, particularly since the U.S. military is stretched too thin already and will need thousands of more troops in Iraq.

The wars in Liberia as well as other civil wars in Africa are being waged over the control of minerals like diamonds, gold, cobalt and coltan (needed to build space ships and cellular phones). In Liberia, the different factions also finance themselves by selling diamonds to traders in the international market.

But, while Liberia is not that strategically important for world imperialism, Western Africa is. It has plenty of oil. Countries like Nigeria and Angola now supply the U.S. with as much oil as Mexico and Venezuela. Although the oil from Western Africa is not as plentiful or as cheap to extract as that of the Middle East, it is of relatively high quality with easy coastal access.

Workers and youth are paying with their blood so the local bosses and imperialists can get rich and powerful. The different warring factions in Liberia and other African countries use teenagers and children as cannon fodder in their struggles. It is time to put an end to this hell of war, AIDS, famine and mass poverty. It is time to organize a mass revolutionary movement and fight for a society without bosses — communism. ★

LETTERS

POLITICS IS PRIMARY IN 'CURING' AIDS

I have no quarrel with the author of "AIDS Article Got It Wrong" (CHALLENGE, 6/25). The HIV virus exists. But there's a big difference between the HIV deniers and persons who like myself, desire a communist approach to disease. Well-balanced nutrition, safe water and doing away with homelessness, drugs and the devastation of imperialist wars are primary to a healthy life. Prevention is equally important. The disagreement lies in the stressing of a more political, social approach to controlling the spread of AIDS.

Joshua Horn's book, *Away With All Pests*, deals with communist medical practices in revolutionary China. The attack on syphilis began with eliminating prostitution and elevating the status of women. People afflicted with the latent phase of syphilis were found by relying on education with posters, theatre in market places and meetings to win the confidence of the peasants — all prior to mass treatment with penicillin.

The campaign against snail disease, infecting 80% of the peasant population in some areas, stressed prevention and interrupting the life cycle of the blood fluke because the drug therapy is very toxic and must be given over a prolonged course. Millions of peasants were educated and mobilized to scour the rice paddies, canals and waterways inundated by the fluke larvae. Using both political and medical approaches, China was able to bring schistosomiasis under near complete control.

Dr. Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute thinks these variables cause AIDS: the HIV virus immunodeficiency, autoimmunity, and neural, renal and gastro-intestinal dysfunction. Combined, they influence a compromised immune system. Primary in Africa would be unsafe water and malnutrition. In the U.S. it's bad nutrition, a stressful lifestyle, unprotected sex, poverty, lack of prevention and IV drug use. When the author of "Wrong" admits that AIDS is primarily killing the poor and is in that sense a disease of poverty, he fails to mention the co-factors destroying the immune system that pave the way to spread HIV.

The drugs combating HIV's "life cycle" and preventing AIDS are also highly toxic. AZT, the main drug used for the AIDS syndrome, causes bone marrow depletion and anemia. The powerful sulfonamide antibiotics used to prevent AIDS infections like pneumonia, cause bone marrow destruction and kill off digestive flora because they are designed for only weeks, but are prescribed for years.

"Most conventional health professionals view medicines as biochemical magic bullets which are expected to provide instant results. This approach has been very successful in certain areas,

such as in the treatment of acute illness, but it has been shown to have major limitations when it comes to treating chronic or degenerative disease." (You Don't Have to Die, by Leon Chariton and James Strohecker)

I never meant to suggest that African doctors can't tell the difference between HIV-implicated illness and AIDS, diagnosed as persistent cough, diarrhea, etc. The U.S. medical system admits 11 different AIDS diagnoses WITHOUT laboratory evidence of HIV! Kaposi's sarcoma in a patient under 60, herpes simplex of more than a month's duration, and pneumocystis carinii pneumonia are only three. (Current Medical Diagnosis and Treatment, p. 1273) Increasingly, AIDS patients are not dying of diseases that are common to the AIDS infections, but are succumbing to Hepatitis C, from IV drug use.

Capitalism causes death from the HIV virus. The profit system's persistent war on the working class makes our immune system more vulnerable to HIV, TB or any virus or bacteria. Bush's \$15 billion AIDS "program" for Africa is designed to enrich the drug companies while providing inroads to reap oil profits. Roche has recently manufactured the new drug Fusion for persons resistant to current treatments. It's available at \$19,000/year! We should fight for cheap anti-virals while pointing out that the best solution is prevention, provided by mass nutrition, potable water, safe sex and a healthy life style. This is possible for the majority only when capitalism is smashed.

Red Nurse

NOT IN OUR LIFETIME? DON'T BET ON IT!

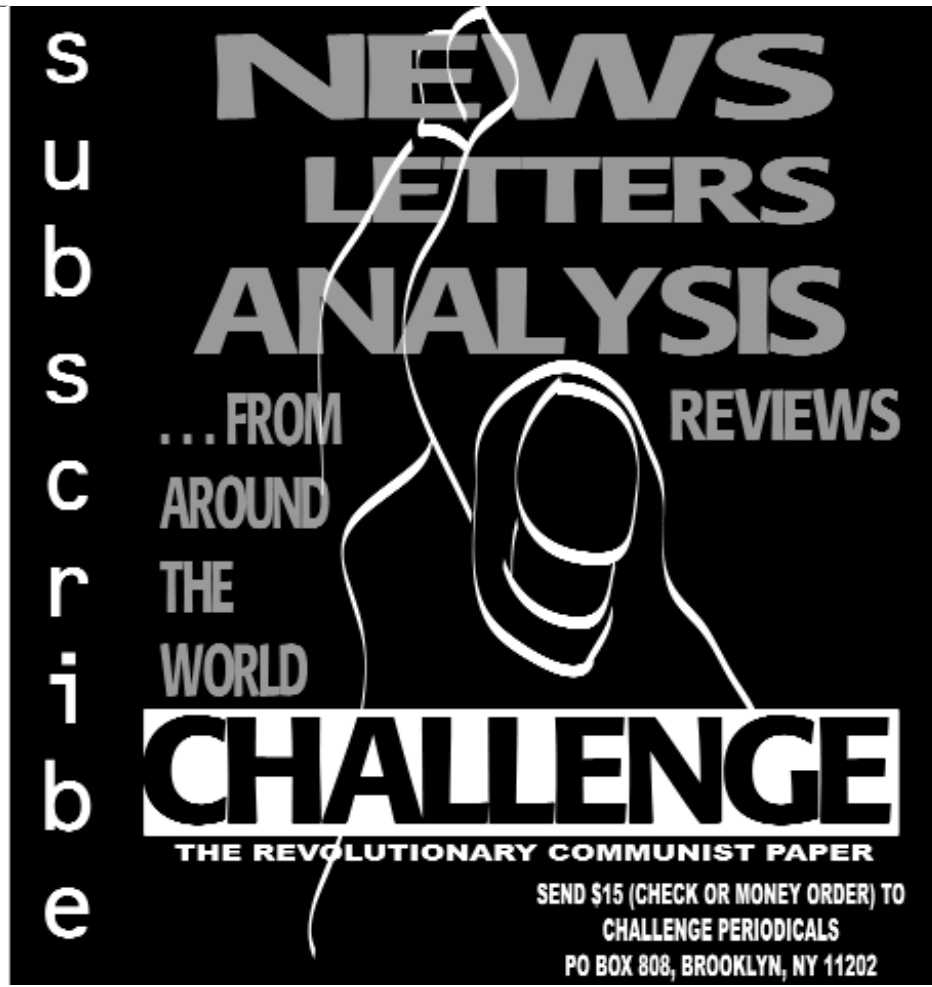
Despite their vast military superiority, 50% of all U.S. combat forces are currently tied down in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities, by a combination of local nationalists, warlords and Muslim fun-

'One big political motivation for me is to see how the bosses can be taken. Their empire, while formidable, is built on sand. They are, as Mao said, paper tigers. We've got them surrounded.'

A Reader

damentalists. More than two months after Top Gun declared victory, Iraq and even Afghanistan, are not yet pacified. Urban fighting has rendered U.S. imperialism's ability to "Shock and Awe" and reign death from 30,000 feet useless. Rumsfeld & Co., by praising their "amazing" military victory, are counting their chickens before they hatch. This raises some interesting possibilities.

If they can't secure Kabul or Tikrit, what could they do against a communist-led working class armed insurrection in Mexico City, New York or Los Angeles?



Mexico City has over 20 million people, industrial workers and youth, about 20% of the total population of Mexico. What if the PLP were able to take control of the city? How many U.S. troops would be needed to take it back? And what if the invasion of Mexico was met by armed insurrections from San Salvador to Los Angeles, from Chicago to NYC? How many troops would the bosses need then? And what affect would these uprisings have on the morale of the troops? With PLP developing a mass base in the armed forces, entire units could mutiny and join the rebels.

Of course, it's possible the bosses would try to level a major city under the control of the working class, but that too would come at a big political price. You get the picture. The main strength of U.S. imperialism is not its vast war machine or billions of dollars. Their main strength comes from the lack of a world communist movement. Politics is primary.

CHALLENGE is correct for stressing the long term nature of the struggle. We cannot say it enough. On the long road to revolution, building a mass international PLP is everything. That is what will make the above scenario possible. One big political motivation for me is to see

how the bosses can be taken. Their empire, while formidable, is built on sand. They are, as Mao said, paper tigers. We've got them surrounded.

A Reader

Driving Towards Revolution

I work for a contractor for large construction companies. I ride to work with a couple of other workers. The ride has turned into a communist school. One of them doesn't know how to read. I give CHALLENGE to the worker who knows

how to read and ask him to read out loud so the other can understand. When he finishes reading, I say, "O.K., if there's something you don't understand, ask me so I can explain about the Party." Now these two co-workers defend the Party's line.

I invited all my co-workers to the Party's May Day march and to my surprise, 11 of them came. That's why we should never underestimate the working class.

One morning we came to work like every other day. One of my co-workers was unloading the truck while I was inspecting the work we had to do for the day. All of a sudden, I heard some yelling and I ran to see what happened.

The foreman, a very big white guy, wanted to hit one of my co-workers, while he yelled insults at him. The foreman was new and he brought his own rules that we didn't know about. He was furious because after my co-worker had unloaded the truck, he had started to wash it. My co-worker, who didn't understand anything the foreman was yelling at him, yelled back at him to leave. This made the foreman, who didn't speak Spanish, madder.

When I saw how mad the foreman was, I immediately intervened to defend my co-worker telling the foreman in English, "Don't even think about touching him because you'll have to deal with all of us." Another worker yelled at the worker who was using the hose to wash the truck, "Wet him, wet him!"

At this point all the workers got down from the scaffolding with their trowels in their hands. One had his level. When the foreman saw this, he got scared and said to me, "I don't want to do anything to him," and he went to get the owner of the building. When he returned with the owner, the tension started again, because the foreman started to yell at the worker who had told the other worker to wet him.

We prepared to return to the attack. We picked up our tools again to defend ourselves and one of the workers told the owner, "If you don't leave now, we're .

continued on next page

MORE LETTERS

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going to throw you into the street, " and like two dogs with their tails between their legs, they went back to the office and closed the door.

There were workers from other companies in the area and they came to see what was happening. When we told them what happened, they all congratulated us for what we did, because they too had been the objects of insults and yelling by the foremen and owners.

The owner of the company that I work for called and told us that he didn't want us there and sent us home. But before going, we talked with the workers of the other companies and we told them that we have to unite as workers, no matter what our color, whether we are white, black, or Latin, the bosses attack all of us.

Some black and white workers work there. Before we left the job, they came over to us and gave us their hands, congratulating us. Now whenever they see me they call me "brother!"

The next day the boss sent us again to the same building. We got to work at the same time as usual and it was a big surprise when we saw the owner, accompanied by the foreman. He told us, "Forget about everything that happened and you all will have priority on this job."

I feel proud to belong to PLP and serve the working class.

Red Construction Worker

Union Works To Divide Workers

It is pay day and I notice that a fellow employee gets an extra check. I wonder what this is all about. It was for thousands of dollars. I asked around and found out that Local 200, the pharma-

cists union at John Stroger Hospital (formerly Cook County Hospital) had gotten a settlement about overtime. Only a handful of employees got this extra check including officers of the Local. Nobody had told the membership that the Local's lawyers had taken the issue to arbitration.

Sometimes when a member needs legal advice or help about an on the job issue, the Local says that it is spending too much money on lawyers. There was a female employee that was being sexually harassed by a union officer. The union only gave her perfunctory assistance. There was a member who was falsely accused of using the hospital's fax machine and lost his job. He had to hire his own attorney to get his job back. Why do these corrupt no-good people always come out on top? When the Local was under communist leadership, everything was transparent and honest. Now I am scared.

A Reader

ANC Leads Workers To Poverty

The articles in CHALLENGE (7/23) about the mass struggles in South Africa and its betrayals were very informative. One article offers some good criticisms of Nelson Mandela and the now ruling party African National Congress (ANC). The other article, about water privatization and the misery and death it causes, also did a good job of exposing the role of the ANC. However, it failed to expose the leader of the ANC itself — Nelson Mandela. As Mandela celebrates his 85th birthday with guests ranging from Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and Bill and Hillary Clinton to Oprah Winfrey and Robert DeNiro, it is impor-

tant to have a sober assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of his role. Mandela's accomplishment was to compromise with capitalism — to leave intact the system of class exploitation and to allow the continued racist oppression of the black masses. Because many people still idolize Mandela it is important to expose him. To fail to do so thwarts the political development of our class.

In that regard, the article said that the struggle of workers, students, and oppressed masses to overthrow apartheid was "co-opted by black rulers." This analysis overlooks the fundamental weakness in the movement and its ideology. The struggle was led by ANC, a nationalist liberal bourgeoisie organization, which included the Communist Party linked to the former Soviet Union, which had become revisionist. If it had been led by real communists, it would have fought capitalism along with apartheid for the cause of seizing state power by the workers and building communism. So as any nationalist movement, the movement against apartheid ended at the dead-end of capitalism. This is an internal weakness in the movement. To term it "co-option" keeps us from learning the political lessons of that failure. Bourgeois ideas led the ANC to do what the nationalist movements did in El Salvador, Nicaragua and other places — betray the working class.

Internationalist Reader

Raising Red Ideas at Church Conference

I want to describe the political work I did recently at a major church conference. Self-critically, I did not take this gathering very seriously, even though I have been involved in the church since 1992 and have a solid base within the local church.

About 5,000 people participated — predominantly white professors, lawyers, civil servants, professional religious lay people, ministers, school administrators, retirees, etc. With comrades from the host city, we sold or distributed 21 CHALLENGES and 450 leaflets. One titled, "Smash Racism, Fascism, and Imperialism with Communist Revolution; Join the Progressive Labor Party," went like Belgian waffles. I also participated in a broader effort to win members of this church to support a proposal for our next convention, opposing imperialism. From the floor in some of the sessions or through literature distribution, we raised many aspects or all of the Party's line.

This was a very modest effort when compared to the liberal heavy hitters who dominated the sessions: Howard Zinn (an old professor of mine), Julian Bond (a former student), Tom Hayden (a sellout from the SDS days — we gave him a copy of CHALLENGE to jerk his chain), Robert Reich (an architect of Welfare Reform), Robert Coles (who argues that rich kids are oppressed), Jonathan Kozol (who sees the problems but not the real solution) and a variety of others. Without a revolutionary communist outlook, these "critics" of U.S. imperialism become a misleading force, at best.

At the same time, thousands of folks there were, as we say in the Bible, "hungering and thirsting" after righteousness (a communist understanding of our true condition as wage slaves in a corrupt and murderous system). With better planning we could have gotten out even more literature and attended the whole convention instead of part of it. There will be future opportunities to fight these ideological battles. Revolution in our lifetime — or the next.

Red Rev

WE SHOULD BE OUTRAGED AGAINST RACIST BUDGET CUTS

BOSTON, July 9 — "No I won't face the administration. They only want to teach us to accept our death rather than fight for our education." Thus, began one PLP student's impassioned speech at a UMass-Boston (University of Massachusetts) community meeting to discuss the budget cuts. Her bold tone brought applause and respect from students who are now organizing a militant response to the current attacks on our working class university where 30% of the students are black, Latin or Asian.

In the past three years, the budget has been cut by one-third. UMass has attempted to stay afloat, of course, on the backs of workers, students and professors: lay-offs, speed-ups, cuts in student services, tuition and fee hikes.

We should be outraged by each one of these attacks! Workers and students should not accept these budget cuts. Passivity will allow the bosses to cut even more services particularly to pay for the endless imperialist wars the U.S. rulers need for their world domination. We should also understand the role of universities: to help the ruling class maintain control of us.

At the meeting, the administration sat in the front of the room, controlled the microphones, and encouraged workers from different departments to squabble over the details of how money is to be saved. Meanwhile, the union endorsed their own set

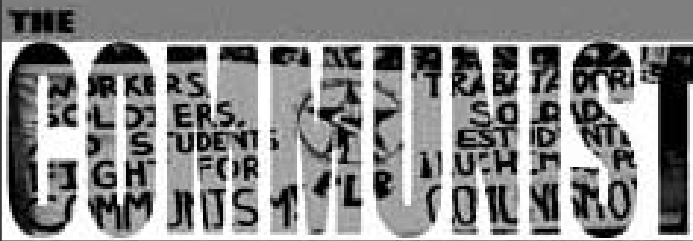
of cuts! The only "solution" offered by the administration and union leaders was to vote the Republican governor out of office, even though a Democratic legislature increased the cuts to UMass-Boston he had proposed earlier!

We in PLP have to be bolder in these struggles. We have to put forward our communist politics clearly and distribute CHALLENGE and our leaflets. An improvement has been that we now have weekly CHALLENGE sales and leaflet distribution at UMass. We are making a lot of friends, and we are holding a dinner discussion on how to fight budget cuts with them next week. The goal of the discussion is to win a number of our friends to come out with us and hold a big CHALLENGE sale on campus, at the train station, and through the surrounding working-class neighborhoods. We want to help workers and students understand why these cuts are happening and how we can organize to fight back.

The misleaders always whine, "What can we do? The economy is bad...we have to accept the cuts."

What can we do? Organize workers and students to shut down public education with a general strike: this would be one battle in the longer fight to destroy the rotten system of capitalism and replace it with communism.✱

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Bonus Marchers: Bosses Used the U.S. Army to Attack Veterans

During the depths of the Great Depression in 1932, tens of thousands of World War I veterans demanded a promised "bonus" of \$50 to \$100. In 1923, Congress agreed to pay this bonus — in 1945. But the vets were starving. Once hailed as "heroes," they now suffered evictions, unemployment, and hunger and "lived" in Hoovervilles, shacks made from scrap wood and tarpaper.

In April, 1932 the Communist leaders of the Workers Ex-Servicemen's League, Pete Cacchione, James Ford and Emanuel Levin, appeared before a Congressional committee and demanded immediate payment. The committee scorned them, so the Communist Party called for a veterans' march on Washington.

Within days, hundreds, then thousands began their trek to the Capital. In broken down cars and trucks, on foot, hitchhiking, hopping freight trains, they came, from as far away as Alaska, as stowaways from Hawaii, from Little Rock, Arkansas and Peru, Indiana and Dubuque, Iowa, as well as the big cities. Several thousand took over the switching yards in Cleveland, stopping all freight traffic until a train was made up for them to Washington. Two hundred wounded on the battlefields of France, many on crutches, came from the National Soldiers Home in Johnson City, Tenn.

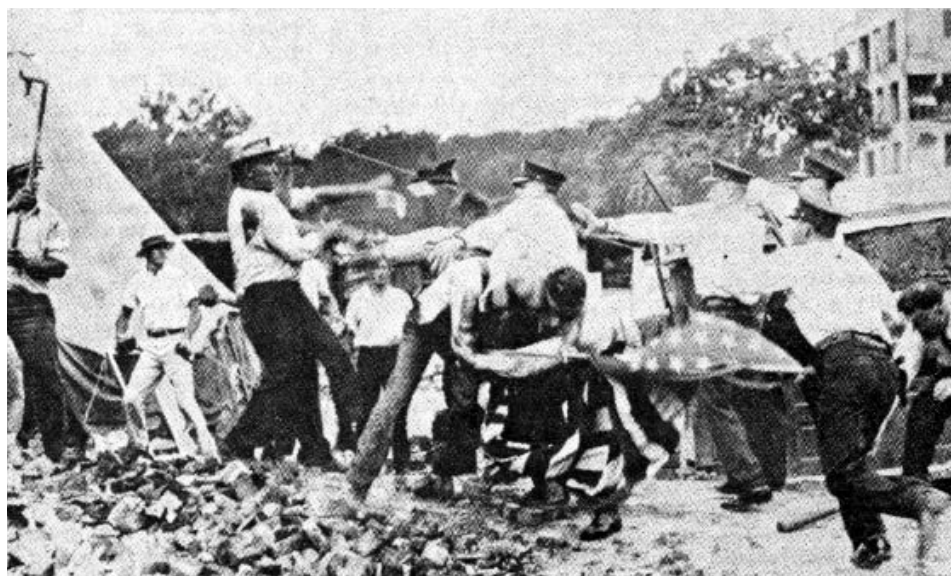
The press screamed. The Washington, DC police chief wired governors, mayors, sheriffs and city police chiefs to turn

them back, but it was like trying to turn back the tide. When the first contingent of 200 vets, with women and children, left Portland, Ore., they were warned that Communists had called the march. "We don't give a damn who called it," they declared. "We want our money."

By June 15, almost 25,000 had arrived in Washington to demand their "bonuses" now. Black and white, men and women, they carried bitter signs, "Heroes in 1917 — Bums in 1932," and "We Fought for Democracy — Where Is It?" Black veterans carried signs against racism.

They occupied one abandoned building, built a small village of huts and put down stakes in the Anacostia Flats. They lived in caves and holes in the ground, in shacks and beneath the open sky. Police Chief Glassford said the rich "looked upon the occupation of the nation's capital as a revolutionary action." The National Economy League, financed by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Marshall Field, and the head of Standard Oil, opposed paying the bonuses. Congress went home on July 17, without taking action.

On July 28, the bonus marchers refused Glassford's order to leave the occupied building and the cops advanced with guns drawn. The unarmed vets fought back, and two were killed. President Hoover then ordered U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Douglas MacArthur, assisted by Colonel (and future President) Dwight Eisenhower and Major George S. Patton, to clear the



vets out. The New York Times reported: "Down Pennsylvania Avenue...the regulars came, the cavalry leading the way, and after them the tanks, the machine-gunners and the infantry..."

With 200 armed troops in front of the bonus "fort," the "mounted men charged. They rode downstreet, clearing the path with their sabers, striking those within reach...Amidst scenes reminiscent of the mopping up of a town in the World War, Federal troops...drove the army of bonus seekers from the shanty village." A tear gas bomb killed an 11-week-old baby and a soldier stabbed a 7-year-old boy trying to save his pet rabbit.

At Anacostia Flats, the veterans threw up barricades of mattresses, chairs, boxes and tables. "The battle was swift and savage. The cavalry charged, sabers swinging...the infantry moved in with

gas masks and gas bombs. Soon the...city of the veterans was ashes, the soldiers putting the huts...to the torch." ("Labor's Untold Story" by Boyer and Morais, p. 271) Men, women and children staggered through neighboring streets, blinded by gas, pursued by the troops. MacArthur insisted the "mob" was driven by "the essence of revolution."

From World I to World War II, from Vietnam to 800 GI wives chasing a Colonel from a meeting and demanding their men come home from Iraq (See CHALLENGE 7/23), working class soldiers and their families have rebelled against the imperialist war makers. When PLP has a mass base in the armed forces, soldiers and sailors will in fact be driven by "the essence of revolution," and they will finish the job.✪

Soldiers from U.S., DR and PR Used as Cannon Fodder

On July 16, the U.S. government held a citizenship ceremony in Washington Heights, Manhattan, for Riayan Tejada, a Dominican-born Marine killed on April 11 as the U.S. invaded Baghdad. Another Dominican-born soldier, Sgt. Harold Puello Coronado, who was in the Army for 17 years, was killed in mid-July when Iraqi guerrillas attacked a convoy he was leading. The last time he spoke with his wife in Pennsylvania, was in April when he was sent to Iraq. She said he admitted being afraid but that "duty" called. He left behind a widow and three sons. Spanish TV in the U.S. showed his crying aunt and relatives in San Cristóbal, the town near the capital of Dominican Republic where he was born.

President Hipólito Mejía of Dominican Republic (DR) is planning to send a 300-strong contingent of military and police personnel to Iraq in September. They will be part of the 1,200 troops from El Salvador, Honduras, etc. and led by the Spanish Army contingent also being sent there. This is part of Bush's "Coalition of the Willing" that supported the Iraq war. Because of local protests, the Indian government was forced to cancel its plan to send 15,000 troops to help the U.S. and UK forces in Iraq.

Growing anger over the continued deaths and casualties in Iraq is putting pressure on Bush's lackeys, like President Mejía, to think twice about serving their masters. Mejía and the others hope that sending troops will bring aid from Washington. The economy of the DR is a disaster, worsened by the Enron-type bil-

lionaire bankers of Baninter. These bankers kept two sets of books, which turned them into billionaires with their fleet of private jets and helicopters, and bribing off generals and politicians including the current and previous Presidents.

Workers in the DR are fed up and there have been militant protests against the government and the IMF, which is imposing more misery on the people. To try to mislead the masses' anger, the government uses racist patriotism saying that Haiti is becoming a threat to the country (hundreds of thousands of Haitians are super-exploited in the DR). Of course, when it comes to serving U.S. imperialism, the government conveniently forgets about this patriotism.

U.S. bosses believe in "globalization" when it serves their interests and saves their asses, as in Iraq. But workers and soldiers from Upper Manhattan to Santo Domingo pay the price with their lives. Those who survive will be discarded when they are no longer useful to the bosses. Already, the U.S. government is severely cutting back medical benefits for veterans. And when they return to civilian life, they will only find a capitalist world full of racism, mass unemployment and misery. While soldiers and their families demand, "Send Us Home," we can build PLP in and out of the armed forces and forge the revolutionary workers-soldiers unity to smash the imperialist war makers.✪

Soldiers from Puerto Rico have been used as cannon fodder by U.S. imperialism since it became a colony after the 1898 Spanish-American war. Iraq is no exception. On July 16, 28-year old Ramón Reyes Torres, of the 432nd Airborne of the U.S. Army Reserve based in Ceiba, Puerto Rico, became the 148 GI, and the eighth from Puerto Rico, to be killed in action in Iraq. Three other members of 432nd were injured by the guerrilla attack against their convoy.

Like many other families of GIs stationed in Iraq, the relatives of these soldiers are demanding they come home. "The Puerto Rican government is under pressure from relatives of the local units stationed for months in Iraq and Afghanistan to be sent home." (El Diario-La Prensa, NYC, 7/17).

Ferdinand Mercado, Secretary of State of Puerto Rico, responded: "We know their petition...but the loved ones of the soldiers also must understand that their relatives have chosen to participate in these events to defend democracy [read: the oil profits of Exxon-Mobil, Chevron-Texaco, Halliburton, etc.]."

But it isn't true that GIs are in Iraq by choice. Many are in the military because of the "poverty draft" (lack of civilian jobs or to try to get training to get a better job in a future civilian life). More and more GIs want to go home.

The situation has reached the point where General John Abizaid, chief of the U.S. occupation forces, has threatened to punish soldiers who keep complaining to reporters about going home. He might order soldiers to stay in Iraq even longer, and more will be sent as the low intensity war heats up.

Soldiers from Puerto Rico have died in higher number in proportion to other army units from the mainland. Some 4,000 local reservists and National Guards were mobilized from Puerto Rico for the Iraq war. This does not include those of Puerto Rican descent in the regular Army, other branches of the service or who live in the mainland.

"Where there is oppression there is rebellion," was a popular slogan during the mass struggles in Puerto Rico and all over the world during the Vietnam War. Better yet, let's make these rebellions into mass revolutionary struggles to end imperialist wars and the profit system.✪

